

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 05200 171443Z

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SAM-01 SP-02 PRS-01 INR-07 INRE-00

PM-03 NSC-05 DODE-00 CIAE-00 SR-02 ORM-01 SCA-01

SCS-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /052 W
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O R 171150Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5499

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5200

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, SN, VS

SUBJECT: GOS DISPOSITION OF VIETNAMESE C-130

REF: (A) STATE 87831, (B) SINGAPORE 1497, (C) SINGAPORE 1546

1. WE FULLY ENDORSE POSITION SUGGESTED BY EMBASSY SINGAPORE AND CONCURRED IN BY DEPARTMENT, TO WIT: RETURN OF AIRCRAFT AND RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES ARE SEPARATE PROBLEMS AND SHOULD BE DEALT WITH SEPARATELY. PROPER CHANNEL FOR RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES HAS ALREADY BEEN PROPOSED.

2. WITH REFERENCE TO RETURN OF BADLY NEEDED C130 AIRCRAFT, EMBASSY SINGAPORE COULD DRAW ON FOLLOWING DURING ITS APPROACH TO GOS:

A. UNCERTAINTY EXPRESSED IN MFA AIDE MEMOIRE THAT ANY VNAF CREW WOULD NOT RETURN PLANE TO VIETNAM HAS NO BASIS IN FACT AND IS GROUNDLESS. VNAF CREWS HAVE BEEN DELIVERING AND RETURNING C-130'S TO AND FROM LOCKHEED REPAIR FACILITY (LASS) IN SINGAPORE OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME WITHOUT LOSING AN AIRCRAFT. VNAF CREW HAS JUST DELIVERED C-130 TO SINGAPORE AND IS THERE NOW TO FLY OVERHAULED AIRCRAFT BACK TO VIETNAM.

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 05200 171443Z

B. CURRENTLY, VNAF HAS FIVE C130'S IN THE WORKS AT LASS AND

THREE MORE WILL BE DELIVERED THERE IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS. LASS HAS MADE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO SINGAPORE ECONOMY AND IS CONTINUING TO DO SO. VNAF CREWS WILL MAKE DELIVERIES AND FLY AWAY UNLESS, OF COURSE, ATTITUDE OF GOS CAUSES GVN TO CEASE USE OF LASS.

C. VNAF C-130 NO. 543 IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION AT LASS ON APRIL 24. VNAF CREW WILL FLY AIRCRAFT DOWN TO LASS FOR INPUT AND PICK UP 543. ADDITIONAL CREW FOR IMPOUNDED C-130 CAN EASILY BE PUT ON THIS FLIGHT.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT MECHANICS OF RETURN OF AIRCRAFT SHOULD BE MATTER OF NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GOS AND GVN. HOWEVER, GOS STONEWALLING CONCERNING THIS PLANE SEEMS TO US TO BE UNREASONABLE AND IRRESPONSIBLE IN VIEW OF THE NEED HERE, AND FACT THAT VNAF HAS HISTORY OF DELIVERING AND RETURNING AIRCRAFT.

4. IT POSSIBLE THAT SOUTH GVN CHARGE AND MFA OFFICIAL UNAWARE OF NUMBER OF VNAF PLANES AT LASS AND PROFIT TO SINGAPORE FROM THIS OPERATION. EMBASSY SINGAPORE MAY WISH TO PASS INFORMATION ON TO BOTH.

5. IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, SUGGEST USAF SEND CREW TO PICK UP PLANE AND FLY IT BACK TO GVN, AS THEY DO FOR C-130'S NOW RECEIVING DEPOT MAINTENANCE IN US. DEPT PROBABLY UNAWARE THIS FACT WHEN LAST SENTENCE, PAR. 3, ADDED TO MESSAGE.

6. AT SAME TIME, EMBASSY MIGHT WISH TO PRESENT MFA AND GOH WITH SUITABLY BOUND COPY OF SHAKESPEARE'S "MERCHANT OF VENICE", WITH MARKS AT PASSAGE WITH FAMOUS DEFENSE OF THE DEMAND OF SHYLOCK FOR THE POUND OF FLESH.
MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH MR. JOHNSON S/S-O

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